

=> fil wpix  
FILE 'WPIX' ENTERED AT 11:21:42 ON 21 MAY 2004  
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FILE LAST UPDATED: 20 MAY 2004 <20040520/UP>  
MOST RECENT DERWENT UPDATE: 200432 <200432/DW>  
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<http://www.stn-international.de/archive/stnews/news0104.pdf> <<<

>>> SINCE THE FILE HAD NOT BEEN UPDATED BETWEEN APRIL 12-16  
THERE WAS NO WEEKLY SDI RUN <<<

=> d all abeq tech abex tot 185

★ L85 ANSWER 1 OF 2 WPIX COPYRIGHT 2004 THOMSON DERWENT on STN *waiting for translation*  
AN 2003-432116 [41] WPIX  
DNN N2003-344917 DNC C2003-114390  
TI **Vaccine** formulation against bacterial, viral, mycotic, prion or  
parasitic infections, includes a combination of at least two paraben  
esters and 2-**phenoxyethanol** as preservative.  
DC B05 C03 P14  
PA (DAVE-N) DANMARKS VETERINAEINST  
CYC 1  
PI DE 20219829 U1 20030508 (200341)\* 13 A61K039-00 <--  
ADT DE 20219829 U1 ~~DE~~ 2002-20219829 20021220  
PRAI DE 2002-20219829 20021220  
IC ICM **A61K039-00**  
ICS A01K047-06  
AB DE 20219829 U UPAB: 20030630  
NOVELTY - **Vaccine** formulation comprising an immunogen, a  
preservative and a carrier includes a combination of at least two paraben  
esters and 2-**phenoxyethanol** as the preservative.  
DETAILED DESCRIPTION - An INDEPENDENT CLAIM is also included for a  
stock solution for **vaccine** production comprising a preservative  
as above together with an **aluminum hydroxide gel**  
and/or quillaja saponin.  
ACTIVITY - Antibacterial; Virucide; Fungicide; Antiparasitic.

**MECHANISM OF ACTION - Vaccine.**

**USE** - The formulation is useful for **vaccinating** humans or other animals against bacterial, viral, mycotic, prion or parasitic infections (a veterinary **vaccine** comprising inactivated porcine parvovirus is specifically disclosed).

**ADVANTAGE** - The preservative is effective in preventing microbiological spoilage without impairing the immunogenic activity of the **vaccine**.

Dwg.0/0

FS CPI GMPI

FA AB; DCN

MC CPI: B04-A07E; B05-A01B; B05-A02; B07-A02; B12-M06; **B14-S11A;**  
**B14-S11B;** C04-A07E; C05-A01B; C05-A02; C12-M06;  
**C14-S11**

TECH UPTX: 20030630

**TECHNOLOGY FOCUS - PHARMACEUTICALS - Preferred Vaccine:** The formulation contains (mg/ml) **methyl paraben** (1.3), **propyl paraben** (0.2) and **2-phenoxyethanol** (1). The carrier comprises diluents, stabilizers, adjuvants (especially **aluminum hydroxide** gel and/or Quil-A saponin), preservatives, buffers, surfactants, viscosity regulators and/or osmotic pressure regulators.

ABEX UPTX: 20030630

**EXAMPLE** - A preservative stock solution comprised **propyl paraben** (40 g), **methyl paraben** (60 g), **2-phenoxyethanol** (200 g) and 96% ethanol (to 2000 ml). A veterinary **vaccine** comprised inactivated porcine parvovirus (21898 ml, 3 microg virions/ml), a 1.3% **aluminum hydroxide** hydrogel (67760 ml), 2 M glycine (319 ml), ultrafiltered water (32258 ml), phosphate-buffered saline (13540 ml, pH 7.2), 2% Quil A solution (1752 ml), 2 M sodium thiosulfate (680 ml), preservative stock solution (1400 ml) and antifoam (392 ml).

L85 ANSWER 2 OF 2 WPIX COPYRIGHT 2004 THOMSON DERWENT on STN

AN 1991-057987 [08] WPIX

DNC C1991-024461

TI New stable **vaccine** compsn. - comprises mixture of antigen and adjuvant amount of interleukin adsorbed onto mineral in suspension and preservative.

DC B04 D16

IN BIXLER, G; PILLAI, S

PA (PRAX-N) PRAXIS BIOLOGICS INC; (AMCY) AMERICAN CYANAMID CO; (PRAX-N) PRAXIS BIOLOGICS

CYC 20

PI WO 9101143 A 19910207 (199108)\* 32

RW: AT BE CH DE DK ES FR GB IT LU NL SE

W: AU CA FI JP KR NO

AU 9060500 A 19910222 (199120)

FI 9200132 A 19920113 (199215)

EP 482076 A 19920429 (199218) EN 32

R: AT BE CH DE DK ES FR GB IT LI LU

NO 9200161 A 19920305 (199223) A61K039-39 <--

JP 04506663 W 19921119 (199301) 11 A61K039-39 <--

AU 648509 B 19940428 (199422) A61K039-39 <--

EP 482076 B1 19950426 (199521) EN 13 A61K039-39 <--

R: AT BE CH DE DK ES FR GB IT LI LU NL SE

DE 69018990 E 19950601 (199527) A61K039-39 <--

ES 2075900 T3 19951016 (199547) A61K039-39 <--

NO 301577 B1 19971117 (199802) A61K039-39 <--

BR 1100816 A3 19980512 (199828) A61K039-02 <--

FI 104233 B1 19991215 (200005) A61K039-39 <--

KR 177179 B1 19990320 (200043) A61K039-39 <--

JP 2004002463 A 20040108 (200405) 15 A61K039-00 <--

JP 3485184 B2 20040113 (200410) 14 A61K039-39 <--

ADT EP 482076 A EP 1990-911344 19900716; NO 9200161 A WO 1990-US3982 19900716, NO 1992-161 19920113; JP 04506663 W JP 1990-510600 19900716, WO 1990-US3982 19900716; AU 648509 B AU 1990-60500 19900716; EP 482076 B1 EP 1990-911344 19900716, WO 1990-US3982 19900716; DE 69018990 E DE 1990-618990 19900716, EP 1990-911344 19900716, WO 1990-US3982 19900716; ES 2075900 T3 EP 1990-911344 19900716; NO 301577 B1 WO 1990-US3982 19900716, NO 1992-161 19920113; BR 1100816 A3 BR 1997-1100816 19970512; FI 104233 B1 WO 1990-US3982 19900716, FI 1992-132 19920113; KR 177179 B1 WO 1990-US3982 19900716, KR 1992-700086 19920113; JP 2004002463 A Div ex JP 1990-510600 19900716, JP 2003-284148 20030731; JP 3485184 B2 JP 1990-510600 19900716, WO 1990-US3982 19900716

FDT EP 482076 A Based on WO 9101143; JP 04506663 W Based on WO 9101143; AU 648509 B Previous Publ. AU 9060500, Based on WO 9101143; EP 482076 B1 Based on WO 9101143; DE 69018990 E Based on EP 482076, Based on WO 9101143; ES 2075900 T3 Based on EP 482076; NO 301577 B1 Previous Publ. NO 9200161; FI 104233 B1 Previous Publ. FI 9200132; JP 3485184 B2 Previous Publ. JP 04506663, Based on WO 9101143

PRAI US 1989-379742 19890714

REP 4.Jnl.Ref; EP 343480; EP 351876; 2.Jnl.Ref; GB 2217600

IC ICM A61K039-00; A61K039-02; A61K039-39  
ICS A61K037-02; A61K038-00; A61K038-20; A61K039-05;  
A61K039-07; A61K039-08; A61K039-085;  
A61K039-09; A61K039-095; A61K039-10;  
A61K039-102; A61K039-104; A61K039-106;  
A61K039-108; A61K039-12; A61K039-15;  
A61K039-21; A61K039-245; A61K039-385;  
A61P031-04; A61P031-12; A61P035-00

AB WO 9101143 A UPAB: 20040205  
The interleukin is preferably at least 1 of interleukin-1 alpha-1beta -2, -2, -4, -5, -6 and -7 and is especially human interleukin-2. The mineral suspension is an aqueous suspension of **alum**. The antigen is selected from bacteria, viruses, macro-components of cells, proteins, peptides, glycoproteins, carbohydrates, parasites, fungi, oncogene products and cancer cells. The bacterial antigen is from a bacterial pathogen e.g. Haemophilus influenzae. The antigen is coupled to a glycoconjugate comprising a bacterial toxin of diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis or CRN etc. The preservative is thimerosal, phenol, benzyl alcohol, **ethyl-** or **ethyl paraben 2** **phenoxylethanol** or m-cresol.  
USE/ADVANTAGE: For producing an immune response to an antigen in a vertebrate, for preventing microbial infections and for treating AIDS.  
Dwg.0/0

FS CPI  
FA AB; DCN  
MC CPI: B02-V02; B04-D02; B12-M06; D05-H07; D05-H09  
ABEQ EP 482076 B UPAB: 19950602  
A stable **vaccine** composition, comprising a mixt. of an antigen and an adjuvant-1beta, interleukin-2, interleukin-3, interleukin-4, interleukin-5, interleukin-6, interleukin-7, or mixts. thereof, absorbed onto an aqueous suspension of **alum** (e.g. **aluminium** hydroxide, or **aluminium** phosphate) and a pharmaceutically acceptable preservative, in a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle and optional adjuvant.  
Dwg.0/0

=> d all abeq tech abex 186

~~186~~ ANSWER 1 OF 1 WPIX COPYRIGHT 2004 THOMSON DERWENT on STN

AN 2000-160229 [14] WPIX

DNC C2000-049970

TI Cosmetic skin care composition, useful e.g. for reducing oily skin and

sebum secretion, contains a low molecular weight fraction from gugulipid.

DC B04 D21  
 IN BAJOR, J S; TALLMAN, M  
 PA (ARDE-N) ARDEN CO DIV CONOPCO INC ELIZABETH  
 CYC 1  
 PI US 6019975 A 20000201 (200014)\* 9 A61K035-78  
 ADT US 6019975 A US 1997-969263 19971113  
 PRAI US 1997-969263 19971113  
 IC ICM A61K035-78  
 ICS A61K039-385  
 AB US 6019975 A UPAB: 20000320

NOVELTY - Cosmetic skin care composition comprises:

(a) 0.0001-5 % of a low molecular weight fraction of gugulipid of molecular weight less than 500 Daltons (Da) as an anti-sebum agent; and  
 (b) a vehicle.

The low molecular weight fraction is obtained by dispersing or dissolving gugulipid in a polar solvent, separating by ultrafiltration and concentrating the filtrate.

ACTIVITY - Dermatological; anti-sebum.

A 6.5% solution of gugulipid extract in methanol was filtered through a 500 Da filter and evaporated to give an extract. Cultured human sebaceous glands were incubated with the extract at 37 deg. C for 30 minutes and sebum production was assayed. The low molecular weight fraction at 0.01% reduced sebum secretion by 47.9% and at 0.04% by 54.5%. Gugulipid at 0.01% reduced sebum secretion by 50.9%.

MECHANISM OF ACTION - Antioxidant.

USE - The composition is useful for reducing or preventing oily skin, reducing sebum secretion and protecting the skin from free radical activity (claimed). The composition prevents shine and stickiness, reduces the appearance of wrinkles and aged skin, improves skin colour, radiance, clarity and finish, and gives an overall youthful appearance. It is particularly useful for application to the face, but may also be used on the neck, chest, back and scalp.

Dwg.0/0

FS CPI  
 FA AB; DCN  
 MC CPI: B04-A10; B04-B01B; B14-N17; B14-R01; B14-S08; D08-B09A  
 ABEX UPTX: 20000320

EXAMPLE - An oil controlling lotion was prepared comprising (% by weight): propylene glycol (1.0); xanthan gum (0.20); disodium N,N'-1,2-ethanediylbisN-carboxymethylglycine (EDTA; 0.10); methyl paraben (0.30); polysorbate 20 (1.50); octyl methoxycinnamate (2.0); low molecular weight fraction of gugulipid (0.001); cetyl alcohol (1.50); polyethylene glycol 165 glycerol stearate (3.0); propyl paraben (0.10); cyclomethicone (15.0); dimethicone (2.0); dimethiconol (0.50); micronized titanium dioxide (0.50); sodium hyaluronate (1% solution; 3.0); triethanolamine (99%; 0.20); salicylic acid (0.20); phenoxyethanol (0.35); and water (q.s.).

=> fil hcaplus

FILE 'HCAPLUS' ENTERED AT 11:21:58 ON 21 MAY 2004

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FILE COVERS 1907 - 21 May 2004 VOL 140 ISS 22

FILE LAST UPDATED: 20 May 2004 (20040520/ED)

This file contains CAS Registry Numbers for easy and accurate substance identification.

=> d all hitstr tot 166

L66 ANSWER 1 OF 4 HCAPLUS COPYRIGHT 2004 ACS on STN

AN 2003:451780 HCAPLUS

DN 139:12330

ED Entered STN: 13 Jun 2003

TI **Vaccine** formulations containing at least two paraben esters and **phenoxyethanol** as preservatives

PA Danmarks Veterinaeinstitut, Den.

SO Ger. Gebrauchsmusterschrift, 13 pp.

CODEN: GGXXFR

DT Patent

LA German

IC ICM A61K039-00

ICS A01K047-06

CC 63-6 (Pharmaceuticals)

Section cross-reference(s): 15

FAN.CNT 1

	PATENT NO.	KIND	DATE	APPLICATION NO.	DATE
PI	DE 20219829	U1	20030612	DE 2002-20219829	20021220
PRAI	DE 2002-20219829		20021220		

AB The invention concerns **vaccines** that contain immunogens and adjuvants in pharmaceutical acceptable carriers with preservative mixts. composed of at least two paraben esters and **phenoxyethanol**. Thus 2 L of ethanolic (96% ethanol) preservative solution were prepared containing

(g): **propyl-4-hydroxybenzoate** 40;

**Methyl-4-hydroxybenzoate** 60; 2-

**phenoxyethanol** 200. The solution was used as a 1400 mL component in a veterinary **vaccine** that further included (mL): inactivated

porcine parvovirus (3 µg Virion/mL) 21898; **alhydrogel** (1.3%

Al2(OH)3) 67760; 2 M glycine 319, water 32258;

phosphate-NaCl, pH 7.2 13540; 2% quil A solution 1752; 2 M sodium thiosulfate 680; antifoaming agent 392.

ST **vaccine** injection preservative **phenoxyethanol** paraben ester

IT Immunostimulants

(adjuvants; **vaccine** formulations containing at least two paraben esters and **phenoxyethanol** as preservatives)

IT Drug delivery systems

(injections; **vaccine** formulations containing at least two paraben esters and **phenoxyethanol** as preservatives)

IT Preservatives

**Vaccines**

(**vaccine** formulations containing at least two paraben esters and **phenoxyethanol** as preservatives)

IT Porcine parvovirus

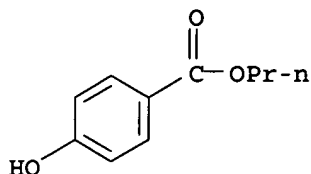
(**vaccine**; **vaccine** formulations containing at least two paraben esters and **phenoxyethanol** as preservatives)

IT 94-13-3, **Propyl-4-hydroxybenzoate**

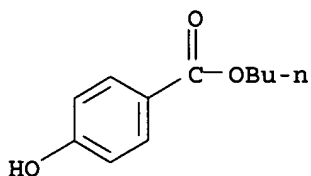
*15r derzel*  
*102(10)*  
*(e)*

94-26-8, Butyl paraben 99-76-3, Methyl-4-hydroxybenzoate 99-96-7D, alkyl esters, esters 120-47-8, Ethyl paraben 122-99-6, 2-Phenoxyethanol 21645-51-2, Aluminum hydroxide (Al(OH)<sub>3</sub>), biological studies 66594-14-7, Quil-A  
 RL: THU (Therapeutic use); BIOL (Biological study); USES (Uses) (vaccine formulations containing at least two paraben esters and phenoxyethanol as preservatives)

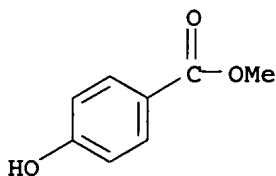
IT 94-13-3, Propyl-4-hydroxybenzoate 94-26-8, Butyl paraben 99-76-3, Methyl-4-hydroxybenzoate 120-47-8, Ethyl paraben 122-99-6, 2-Phenoxyethanol 21645-51-2, Aluminum hydroxide (Al(OH)<sub>3</sub>), biological studies  
 RL: THU (Therapeutic use); BIOL (Biological study); USES (Uses) (vaccine formulations containing at least two paraben esters and phenoxyethanol as preservatives)  
 RN 94-13-3 HCAPLUS  
 CN Benzoic acid, 4-hydroxy-, propyl ester (9CI) (CA INDEX NAME)



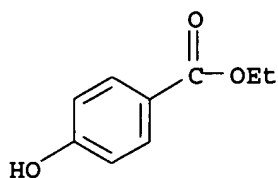
RN 94-26-8 HCAPLUS  
 CN Benzoic acid, 4-hydroxy-, butyl ester (9CI) (CA INDEX NAME)



RN 99-76-3 HCAPLUS  
 CN Benzoic acid, 4-hydroxy-, methyl ester (9CI) (CA INDEX NAME)



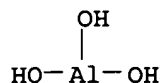
RN 120-47-8 HCAPLUS  
 CN Benzoic acid, 4-hydroxy-, ethyl ester (9CI) (CA INDEX NAME)



RN 122-99-6 HCAPLUS  
 CN Ethanol, 2-phenoxy- (6CI, 7CI, 8CI, 9CI) (CA INDEX NAME)

PhO-CH<sub>2</sub>-CH<sub>2</sub>-OH

RN 21645-51-2 HCAPLUS  
 CN Aluminum hydroxide (Al(OH)<sub>3</sub>) (9CI) (CA INDEX NAME)



L66 ANSWER 2 OF 4 HCAPLUS COPYRIGHT 2004 ACS on STN *- Done*  
 AN 1998:548516 HCAPLUS  
 DN 129:180138  
 ED Entered STN: 28 Aug 1998  
 TI Thimerosal-free preservatives for **vaccines**  
 IN Ng, Assunta S.; Hennessey, John P.; Mancinelli, Ralph J.  
 PA Merck & Co., Inc., USA  
 SO PCT Int. Appl., 25 pp.  
 CODEN: PIXXD2  
 DT Patent  
 LA English  
 IC ICM A61K009-08  
 ICS A61K039-02; A61K039-12; A61K047-10; A61K047-14  
 CC 63-6 (Pharmaceuticals)  
 FAN.CNT 1

	PATENT NO.	KIND	DATE	APPLICATION NO.	DATE
PI	WO 9834594	A1	19980813	WO 1998-US2283	19980203
	W. CA, JP, US				
	RW: AT, BE, CH, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE				
	EP 971696	A1	20000119	EP 1998-906181	19980203
	R: AT, BE, CH, DE, DK, ES, FR, GB, GR, IT, LI, LU, NL, SE, PT, IE, FI				
	JP 2002515056	T2	20020521	JP 1998-534902	19980203
PRAI	US 1997-36900P	P	19970206		
	WO 1998-US2283	W	19980203		
AB	Novel combination of preservatives (Me and Pr parabens, benzyl alc., and 2-phenoxyethanol) were found to pass antimicrobial testing according to USP, BP, and EP. The new preservatives were put into <b>vaccines</b> using L-histidine as a buffer to keep pH at 7.0. HPLC methods were developed to analyze these preservatives and their degradation products.				
ST	preservative <b>vaccine</b> ; paraben preservative <b>vaccine</b>				
IT	HPLC Preservatives				
	<b>Vaccines</b>				
	(thimerosal-free preservatives for <b>vaccines</b> )				
IT	71-00-1, L-Histidine, biological studies				

RL: MOA (Modifier or additive use); THU (Therapeutic use); BIOL (Biological study); USES (Uses)  
 (buffer; thimerosal-free preservatives for **vaccines**)

IT 100-51-6, Benzyl alcohol, biological studies 122-99-6, 2-**Phenoxyethanol** 5026-62-0, Benzoic acid, 4-hydroxy-, methyl ester, sodium salt 35285-69-9, Benzoic acid, 4-hydroxy-, propyl ester, sodium salt

RL: THU (Therapeutic use); BIOL (Biological study); USES (Uses)  
 (thimerosal-free preservatives for **vaccines**)

RE.CNT 7 THERE ARE 7 CITED REFERENCES AVAILABLE FOR THIS RECORD

RE

- (1) American Cyanamid Company; EP 0750907 A2 1997 HCAPLUS
- (2) Cameron, J; Develop Biol Standard 1974, V24, P155 HCAPLUS
- (3) Dwyer; US 5603933 A 1997 HCAPLUS
- (4) Kneecze, M; Determination of Pilocarpine, Physostigmine, its Degredation Product Reserine and Preservatives by High Performance Liquid Chromatography 1980, V198, P529 HCAPLUS
- (5) Lowe, I; Let Appl Microbiol 1994, V18, P115 HCAPLUS
- (6) Monath, T; Develop Biol Standard 1996, V87, P219 MEDLINE
- (7) Parker; US 5672350 A 1997 HCAPLUS

IT 122-99-6, 2-**Phenoxyethanol**  
 RL: THU (Therapeutic use); BIOL (Biological study); USES (Uses)  
 (thimerosal-free preservatives for **vaccines**)

RN 122-99-6 HCAPLUS

CN Ethanol, 2-phenoxy- (6CI, 7CI, 8CI, 9CI) (CA INDEX NAME)

PhO-CH<sub>2</sub>-CH<sub>2</sub>-OH

L66 ANSWER 3 OF 4 HCAPLUS COPYRIGHT 2004 ACS on STN

AN 1975:103063 HCAPLUS

DN 82:103063

ED Entered STN: 12 May 1984

TI Preservative systems compatible with DPT (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus)-polio (Salk) and TABTD [typhoid A B, tetanus, diphtheria]-polio (Salk) **vaccines**

AU Cameron, Jack

CS Connaught Lab. Ltd., Toronto-Willowdale, ON, Can.

SO Developments in Biological Standardization (1974), 24, 155-65  
 CODEN: DVBSA3; ISSN: 0301-5149

DT Journal

LA English

CC 63-3 (Pharmaceuticals)

AB A review is given of different preservative systems compatible with the title products with particular reference to the 2-**phenoxyethanol** [122-99-6], neomycin [1404-04-2], streptomycin [57-92-1] combination which has proved to be satisfactory. Extended data on the stability of DPT-polio and TABTD-polio preserved with this system are also given.

ST preservative polio **vaccine** compatibility

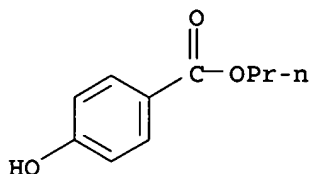
IT Bactericides, Disinfectants and Antiseptics  
 Fungicides and Fungistats  
 Preservatives  
 (for polio **vaccines**, compatibility of)

IT Bordetella pertussis  
 Clostridium tetani  
 Corynebacterium diphtheriae  
 Salmonella typhi  
 (polio **vaccine** containing, preservatives for, compatibility of)

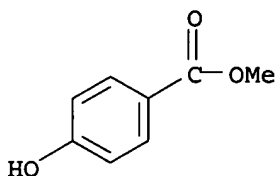
IT **Vaccines**  
 (polio, DPT- and TABTD-, preservatives for, compatibility of)



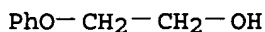
IT Virus, animal  
 (polio-, **vaccines** of, preservatives for, compatibility of)  
 IT 57-92-1, biological studies  
 RL: BIOL (Biological study)  
 (preservative with neomycin and **phenoxyethanol**, for polio  
**vaccine**)  
 IT 1404-04-2  
 RL: BIOL (Biological study)  
 (preservative with **phenoxyethanol** and streptomycin, for polio  
**vaccine**)  
 IT 50-00-0, biological studies 94-13-3 99-76-3 121-54-0  
 122-99-6  
 RL: BIOL (Biological study)  
 (preservative, for **vaccines**)  
 IT 94-13-3 99-76-3 122-99-6  
 RL: BIOL (Biological study)  
 (preservative, for **vaccines**)  
 RN 94-13-3 HCAPLUS  
 CN Benzoic acid, 4-hydroxy-, propyl ester (9CI) (CA INDEX NAME)



RN 99-76-3 HCAPLUS  
 CN Benzoic acid, 4-hydroxy-, methyl ester (9CI) (CA INDEX NAME)



RN 122-99-6 HCAPLUS  
 CN Ethanol, 2-phenoxy- (6CI, 7CI, 8CI, 9CI) (CA INDEX NAME)



L66 ANSWER 4 OF 4 HCAPLUS COPYRIGHT 2004 ACS on STN  
 AN 1975:103061 HCAPLUS  
 DN 82:103061  
 ED Entered STN: 12 May 1984  
 TI Compatibility of various preservatives with live virus **vaccines**  
 AU Gray, Alan; Schuchardt, L. F.; Hanson, H. J.  
 CS Merck Sharp and Dohme, West Point, PA, USA  
 SO Developments in Biological Standardization (1974), 24, 123-9  
 CODEN: DVBSA3; ISSN: 0301-5149  
 DT Journal  
 LA English  
 CC 63-3 (Pharmaceuticals)  
 AB A large number of commonly used preservatives were screened for compatibility with measles and rubella viruses. Thimerosal [54-64-8] and Quatresin

[2748-88-1] with and without EDTA [60-00-4] for sterilization were studied. The effective concns. for a number of preservatives against representative test organisms were also determined

ST preservative compatibility virus **vaccine**

IT Quaternary ammonium compounds, biological studies  
 RL: BIOL (Biological study)  
 (alkyldimethyl(phenylmethyl), chlorides, preservatives for virus **vaccines**, compatibility of)

IT Preservatives  
 (for virus **vaccines**, compatibility of)

IT Virus, animal  
 (measles and rubella, **vaccines** of, preservatives for, compatibility of)

IT **Vaccines**  
 (preservatives for, compatibility of)

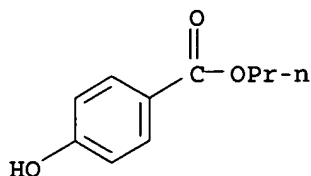
IT Measles  
 Rubella  
 (virus **vaccines** of, preservatives for, compatibility of)

IT 54-64-8 55-56-1 57-09-0 57-15-8 59-50-7 60-00-4, biological studies 60-12-8 70-30-4 94-13-3 99-76-3 100-51-6 102-98-7 121-54-0 122-18-9 122-99-6 123-03-5 136-77-6 2748-88-1 25155-18-4  
 RL: BIOL (Biological study)  
 (preservative, for virus **vaccines**, compatibility of)

IT 94-13-3 99-76-3 122-99-6  
 RL: BIOL (Biological study)  
 (preservative, for virus **vaccines**, compatibility of)

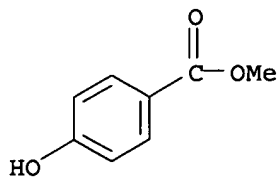
RN 94-13-3 HCAPLUS

CN Benzoic acid, 4-hydroxy-, propyl ester (9CI) (CA INDEX NAME)



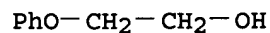
RN 99-76-3 HCAPLUS

CN Benzoic acid, 4-hydroxy-, methyl ester (9CI) (CA INDEX NAME)



RN 122-99-6 HCAPLUS

CN Ethanol, 2-phenoxy- (6CI, 7CI, 8CI, 9CI) (CA INDEX NAME)



=> fil reg

FILE 'REGISTRY' ENTERED AT 11:22:15 ON 21 MAY 2004

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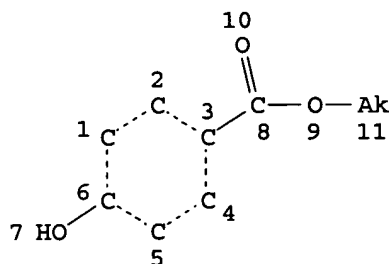
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to the file summary sheet on the web at:  
<http://www.cas.org/ONLINE/DBSS/registryss.html>

=> d sta que l21

L9 4 SEA FILE=REGISTRY ABB=ON PLU=ON 99-76-3 OR 120-47-8 OR  
94-13-3 OR 94-26-8  
L10 3 SEA FILE=REGISTRY ABB=ON PLU=ON 6521-29-5 OR 1083-27-8 OR  
1085-12-7  
L11 STR



NODE ATTRIBUTES:  
DEFAULT MLEVEL IS ATOM  
DEFAULT ECLEVEL IS LIMITED

GRAPH ATTRIBUTES:  
RSPEC 1  
NUMBER OF NODES IS 11

STEREO ATTRIBUTES: NONE

L13 567 SEA FILE=REGISTRY CSS FUL L11  
L14 139 SEA FILE=REGISTRY ABB=ON PLU=ON L13 AND 1/NC  
L15 10 SEA FILE=REGISTRY ABB=ON PLU=ON L14 AND IDS/CI  
L16 2 SEA FILE=REGISTRY ABB=ON PLU=ON L15 AND (C23H38O3 OR  
C20H32O3 OR C17H16O3)  
L17 129 SEA FILE=REGISTRY ABB=ON PLU=ON L14 NOT L15  
L18 131 SEA FILE=REGISTRY ABB=ON PLU=ON (L17 OR L16)  
L19 113 SEA FILE=REGISTRY ABB=ON PLU=ON L18 NOT (11C# OR 13C# OR  
14C# OR C11# OR C13# OR C14# OR (D OR T)/ELS OR LABELED OR ION  
OR CONJUGATE OR 18O# OR 17O#)  
L20 108 SEA FILE=REGISTRY ABB=ON PLU=ON L19 NOT PMS/CI  
L21 108 SEA FILE=REGISTRY ABB=ON PLU=ON (L9 OR L10 OR L20)

=> d his

(FILE 'REGISTRY' ENTERED AT 10:35:07 ON 21 MAY 2004)  
DEL HIS

FILE 'HCAPLUS' ENTERED AT 10:35:28 ON 21 MAY 2004

L1 831 S METHYL PARABEN  
L2 193 S ETHYL PARABEN  
L3 570 S PROPYL PARABEN  
L4 145 S BUTYL PARABEN  
L5 10 S (PENTYL OR HEXYL OR HEPTYL OR OCTYL) () PARABEN  
L6 1303 S (METHYL OR ETHYL OR PROPYL OR BUTYL OR PENTYL OR HEXYL OR BUT  
L7 4512 S METHYLPARABEN OR ETHYLPARABEN OR PROPYLPARABEN OR BUTYLPARABE  
L8 17 S PENTYLPARABEN OR HEXYLPARABEN OR HEPTYLPARABEN OR OCTYLPARABE

FILE 'REGISTRY' ENTERED AT 10:41:40 ON 21 MAY 2004

L9 4 S 99-76-3 OR 120-47-8 OR 94-13-3 OR 94-26-8  
L10 3 S 6521-29-5 OR 1083-27-8 OR 1085-12-7  
L11 STR  
L12 3 S L11 CSS SAM  
L13 567 S L11 CSS FUL  
SAV L13 LEPARABEN/A  
L14 139 S L13 AND 1/NC  
L15 10 S L14 AND IDS/CI  
L16 2 S L15 AND (C23H38O3 OR C20H32O3 OR C17H16O3)  
L17 129 S L14 NOT L15  
L18 131 S L17,L16  
L19 113 S L18 NOT (11C# OR 13C# OR 14C# OR C11# OR C13# OR C14# OR (D O  
L20 108 S L19 NOT PMS/CI  
L21 108 S L9,L10,L20  
E ALUMINUM HYDROXIDE/CN  
L22 1 S E3  
L23 2 S E3,E9  
L24 2 S L22,L23  
L25 1 S ALH4O4/MF NOT CCS/CI  
L26 3 S L24,L25  
E AL2O3/MF  
L27 8 S E3  
L28 1 S L27 NOT (TIS OR MNS OR CCS)/CI

FILE 'HCAPLUS' ENTERED AT 10:51:22 ON 21 MAY 2004

L29 7448 S L21  
L30 4749 S (METHYL OR ETHYL OR PROPYL OR BUTYL) () (P OR 4) () (HYDROXYBENZO  
L31 9 S (P OR 4) () (HYDROXYBENZOIC OR HYDROXY BENZOIC) () ACID () (METHYLE  
L32 303 S (P OR 4) () (HYDROXYBENZOIC OR HYDROXY BENZOIC) () ACID () (METHYL  
L33 0 S (P OR 4) () (HYDROXYBENZOATE OR HYDROXY BENZOATE) () (METHYLESTER  
L34 2 S (P OR 4) () (HYDROXYBENZOATE OR HYDROXY BENZOATE) () (METHYL OR E  
L35 13381 S L1-L8,L29-L34  
L36 21821 S L26  
L37 224019 S L28  
L38 22873 S (AL OR ALUMINUM) () HYDROXIDE  
L39 1548 S (ALUMINUM OR ALUMINA) () (TRIHYDRATE OR TRIHYDROXIDE)  
L40 21348 S AL OH 3  
L41 538 S AL OH 2  
L42 1846 S HIGILITE OR HYDRATED ALUMINA  
L43 83 S L35 AND L36  
L44 124 S L35 AND L38-L42  
L45 155 S L35 AND (L37 OR AL2O3 OR ALUMINA OR (AL OR ALUMINUM) () (TRIOXI  
L46 269 S L43-L45  
L47 2 S L35 AND (ALHYDROGEL OR AL2 OH 3)  
L48 269 S L46,L47

FILE 'REGISTRY' ENTERED AT 11:01:20 ON 21 MAY 2004

L49 1 S 2-PHENOXYETHANOL/CN

FILE 'HCAPLUS' ENTERED AT 11:02:29 ON 21 MAY 2004

L50 2456 S L49  
 L51 2217 S PHENOXYETHANOL OR PHENOXYETHYL ALCOHOL  
 L52 512 S L35 AND L50,L51  
 L53 13 S L52 AND L48  
 L54 1 S L53 AND VACCINE  
 L55 1 S L46 AND VACCINE  
 L56 34 S L35 AND VACCINE  
 L57 4 S L56 AND L50,L51  
 L58 4 S L54,L55,L57  
 E VACCINE/CT  
 L59 38049 S E4-E29  
 E E4+ALL  
 E VACCINATION/CT  
 E E3+ALL  
 L60 2852 S E1,E2  
 E IMMUNIZATION/CT  
 L61 7207 S E3-E7  
 E E3+ALL  
 L62 7370 S E3+NT  
 L63 33 S L35 AND L59-L62  
 L64 4 S L63 AND L52  
 L65 1 S L63 AND L48  
 L66 4 S L58,L64,L65

FILE 'WPIX' ENTERED AT 11:07:39 ON 21 MAY 2004

E DE2002-20219829/AP,PRN  
 L67 1 S E3  
 L68 3154 S L1/BIX OR L2/BIX OR L3/BIX OR L4/BIX OR L5/BIX OR L6/BIX OR L  
 E METHYL PARABEN/DCN  
 E METHYLPARABEN/DCN  
 E E3+ALL  
 L69 1339 S E2 OR 0689/DRN  
 E ETHYLPARABEN/DCN  
 E E3+ALL  
 L70 197 S E2  
 E PROPYLPARABEN/DCN  
 E E3+ALL  
 L71 846 S E2 OR 0607/DRN  
 E BUTYLPARABEN/DCN  
 E BUTYL PARABEN/DCN  
 E R17233+ALL/DCN  
 L72 44 S E1  
 E R10246+ALL/DCN  
 E R02020+ALL/DCN  
 L73 3912 S L68-L72  
 L74 14789 S E1 OR 2020/DRN OR L38/BIX OR L39/BIX OR L40/BIX OR L41/BIX OR  
 L75 85 S L73 AND L74  
 L76 917 S L51/BIX  
 L77 99 S R10245/DCN  
 L78 14 S L75 AND L76,L77  
 L79 307 S L73 AND L76,L77  
 L80 2 S L78,L79 AND VACCIN?/BIX  
 L81 3 S L79 AND A61K039/IC,ICM,ICS  
 L82 2 S L79 AND (B14-S11? OR C14-S11? OR B02-V02 OR C02-V02)/MC  
 L83 3 S L67,L80-L82  
 L84 3 S L83 AND L67-L83  
 L85 2 S L84 AND ALUM?/BIX  
 L86 1 S L84 NOT L85

FILE 'WPIX' ENTERED AT 11:21:42 ON 21 MAY 2004

FILE 'HCAPLUS' ENTERED AT 11:21:58 ON 21 MAY 2004

FILE 'REGISTRY' ENTERED AT 11:22:15 ON 21 MAY 2004

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## Concentrations of Parabens in Human Breast Tumours

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**Key words:** parabens; xenoestrogens; oestrogenic activity; HPLC–MS–MS; human breast cancer; preservatives; cosmetics.

Parabens are used as preservatives in many thousands of cosmetic, food and pharmaceutical products to which the human population is exposed. Although recent reports of the oestrogenic properties of parabens have challenged current concepts of their toxicity in these consumer products, the question remains as to whether any of the parabens can accumulate intact in the body from the long-term, low-dose levels to which humans are exposed. Initial studies reported here show that parabens can be extracted from human breast tissue and detected by thin-layer chromatography. More detailed studies enabled identification and measurement of mean concentrations of individual parabens in samples of 20 human breast tumours by high-pressure liquid chromatography followed by tandem mass spectrometry. The mean concentration of parabens in these 20 human breast tumours was found to be  $20.6 \pm 4.2$  ng g<sup>-1</sup> tissue. Comparison of individual parabens showed that methylparaben was present at the highest level (with a mean value of  $12.8 \pm 2.2$  ng g<sup>-1</sup> tissue) and represents 62% of the total paraben recovered in the extractions. These studies demonstrate that parabens can be found intact in the human breast and this should open the way technically for more detailed information to be obtained on body burdens of parabens and in particular whether body burdens are different in cancer from those in normal tissues. Copyright © 2004 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

### INTRODUCTION

The alkyl esters of *p*-hydroxybenzoic acid (parabens) are used widely as preservatives in many thousands of cosmetic, food and pharmaceutical products (Elder, 1984). These simple esters have proved to be very effective antimicrobial agents, with antimicrobial activity increasing with the length of the alkyl grouping from methyl to *n*-butyl (Murrell & Vincent, 1950), and it is the simplicity and effectiveness of these compounds that have resulted in their widespread use. As such, the human population is exposed to parabens from a wide variety of sources on a daily basis. Parabens are permitted as preservatives in food up to 0.1% and the average daily intake of parabens from food by adult humans was estimated in 1984 to be 4–6 mg kg<sup>-1</sup> (Elder, 1984). In cosmetics, parabens are permitted in concentrations of up to 1% (Elder, 1984). In 1984, it was estimated that parabens were used in 13 200 different cosmetic formulations (Elder, 1984) and a more recent

survey of 215 cosmetic products found that parabens were used in 99% of leave-on products and in 77% of rinse-off cosmetics (Rastogi *et al.*, 1995).

Animal studies have shown that parabens are rapidly absorbed, metabolized and excreted. Parabens are quickly absorbed from the gastrointestinal tract and from blood, hydrolysed to *p*-hydroxybenzoic acid, conjugated and the conjugate excreted in the urine (Jones *et al.*, 1956; Heim *et al.*, 1957; Tsukamoto & Terada, 1960, 1962, 1964; Derache & Gourdon, 1963; Phillips *et al.*, 1978; Kiwada *et al.*, 1979). Parabens also can be absorbed rapidly through intact skin (Whitworth & Jun, 1973; Fischmeister *et al.*, 1975; Komatsu & Suzuki, 1979) and this can be influenced by the presence of penetration enhancers found in cosmetic preparations (Kitagawa *et al.*, 1997). However, the presence of carboxylesterases in skin and subcutaneous fatty tissues results in varying hydrolysis to *p*-hydroxybenzoic acid (Lobemeier *et al.*, 1996) and this can also influence absorption (Bando *et al.*, 1997). However, the question remains as to whether any of the parabens can enter the body intact from the long-term, low-dose levels to which humans are exposed. Parabens have a high oil/water partition coefficient and water solubility decreases with increase in ester chain length (Elder, 1984). Therefore, if any parabens do enter the human body intact, they may be able to accumulate in fatty components of body tissues in a similar manner to that of other lipophilic

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Contract/grant sponsor: Seedcorn Fund of the Veterinary Laboratories Agency.

pollutants that are known to bioaccumulate (Dobson *et al.*, 1989; Dobson, 1993; Sonawane, 1995; Hardell *et al.*, 1996; Gutes *et al.*, 1998; Stellman *et al.*, 1998, 2000; Darbre, 1998).

Most studies have indicated that parabens are not mutagenic (Elder, 1984), but there are reports that they can cause chromosomal aberrations (Ishidate *et al.*, 1978), particularly in the co-presence of polychlorinated biphenyls (Matsuoka *et al.*, 1979), and subcutaneous administration of methylparaben has been reported to cause mammary adenocarcinomas in rats (Mason *et al.*, 1971). At a cellular level, parabens have been shown capable of disrupting cellular function through inhibiting secretion of lysosomal enzymes (Bairati *et al.*, 1994) and causing mitochondrial dysfunction (Nakagawa & Maldeus, 1998). However, the recent discovery that parabens possess oestrogenic activity has challenged the concepts of their toxicity in new ways. Because parabens can bind to oestrogen receptors, they may be able to mediate unwanted effects at much lower concentrations and more specifically than through non-receptor mediated mechanisms.

The oestrogenic activity of parabens was first reported in 1998 (Routledge *et al.*, 1998). Since then, parabens have been shown to bind to oestrogen receptors from different sources, including rodent uterus (Routledge *et al.*, 1998; Blair *et al.*, 2000; Fang *et al.*, 2001) and MCF7 human breast cancer cells (Byford *et al.*, 2002; Darbre *et al.*, 2002, 2003). They have been shown to regulate oestrogen-responsive reporter gene expression in yeast cells (Routledge *et al.*, 1998; Jin-Sung *et al.*, 2000; Nishihara *et al.*, 2000) and in human breast cancer cells (Byford *et al.*, 2002; Darbre *et al.*, 2002, 2003), and expression of the endogenous oestrogen-regulated genes pS2 (Byford *et al.*, 2002) and progesterone receptor (Okubo *et al.*, 2001) in breast cancer cells. Parabens can increase the growth of MCF7 human breast cancer cells (Okubo *et al.*, 2001; Byford *et al.*, 2002; Darbre *et al.*, 2002, 2003), which can be blocked with the antioestrogen ICI 162 780 (faslodex) (Byford *et al.*, 2002; Darbre *et al.*, 2002, 2003), demonstrating the growth effects to be oestrogen-receptor-mediated. Their oestrogenic activity has been demonstrated also in animal models *in vivo* in fish (Pedersen *et al.*, 2000) and in increasing uterine weight in immature rats (Routledge *et al.*, 1998) and immature mice (Darbre *et al.*, 2002, 2003). In line with other environmental oestrogens, butylparaben has been shown also to be able to alter reproductive function in male rats, including reduction in sperm counts (Oishi, 2001). In general, the oestrogenic and antimicrobial activities of the parabens increase with the length and branching of the alkyl ester (Darbre *et al.*, 2002, 2003).

Because oestrogen is known to influence the incidence of breast cancer (Lipworth, 1995) and ablation of oestrogen action remains the preferred treatment for hormone-sensitive breast tumours (Miller, 1996), the presence of oestrogenic chemicals in the breast area could potentially influence both the incidence and treatment of breast cancer. Parabens are used as preservatives in a range of cosmetics applied to the underarm and breast area and it has been suggested that regular application of such oestrogenic chemicals could influence breast cancer development (Darbre, 2001, 2003; Harvey, 2003). However, the outstanding question remains as to whether parabens can enter and accumulate in the human breast. Previous studies have identified other environmental oestrogenic chemicals that can accumulate in fatty tissue of the breast (Dobson, 1993;

Hardell *et al.*, 1996; Gutes *et al.*, 1998; Stellman *et al.*, 1998, 2000). This study has aimed to investigate whether parabens also can be detected in human breast tissue, using available breast tumour material. Initial experiments enabled the extraction of total parabens from human breast tissue to be visualized by thin-layer chromatography. More detailed studies enabled identification and measurement of individual parabens in human breast tumour samples by high-pressure liquid chromatography (HPLC) followed by tandem mass spectrometry (MS/MS).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Human breast tumour material

Samples of human breast tumour material were collected at the Edinburgh Breast Unit and stored in liquid nitrogen.

### Chemical standards

Methylparaben, ethylparaben, *n*-propylparaben, *n*-butylparaben and benzylparaben were purchased from Sigma (Poole, UK). Isobutylparaben was a gift from Nipa Laboratories (Mid-Glamorgan, UK). All compounds were made as stock solutions of 0.1 M in ethanol.

### Extraction of parabens from human breast material and analysis by thin-layer chromatography

All glassware was pre-washed in 0.1 M NaOH and extractions were performed using sterile polycarbonate tubes (Falcon). Samples of human breast tissue (1 g) were chopped finely with a sterile razor and homogenized in 5 ml of hexane using a hand-homogenizer. Samples were left in a sealed polycarbonate tube with mixing for 1 h and then spun at 1500 rpm in a bench centrifuge at room temperature for 2 min. The supernatant was placed in a sterile polycarbonate tube, 5 ml of 0.1 M potassium bicarbonate was added and the tube was inverted 40 times by hand. The mixture was spun at 1500 rpm at room temperature for 2 min to separate the phases. The upper yellow hexane layer containing phenolic compounds was placed in a new sterile polycarbonate tube, 5 ml of 0.1 M potassium carbonate was added and again the tube was inverted 40 times by hand. The mixture was spun at 1500 rpm at room temperature for 2 min to separate the phases. The lower aqueous layer containing the phenols as potassium salts was taken into a new sterile polycarbonate tube and acidified by the addition of 300 µl of concentrated hydrochloric acid to give a pH in the 1–3 range (checked with pH paper). The free phenolic compounds released on acidification were extracted into 5 ml of diethyl ether by inverting the tube by hand 40 times (Pope *et al.*, 1990). The mixture was spun at 1500 rpm at room temperature for 2 min to separate the phases. The upper ether layer was removed and evaporated to dryness under nitrogen overnight in a fume hood.

The extract was taken up in 50 µl of ethanol and aliquots were run against paraben standards (50–400 ng per track) on thin-layer chromatography plates (DC-Alufolien Kieselgel 60 F254, Merck; ca. 6 cm wide × 8 cm high) using a solvent of 5% (v/v) ethanol–95% (v/v) chloroform. Parabens were visualized under ultraviolet light. For quantitation, the image under ultraviolet light was captured digitally



and relative levels of bands were analysed by image analysis using the software packages Transform 3.4 (Fortner) and Origin 6.0.

#### Extraction of parabens from human breast tumour material and analysis by HPLCMS/MS

Samples of human breast tumour material (0.25 g) were chopped finely with a sterile razor and homogenized in a mixture of 6.25 ml of ethanol and 6.25 ml of acetone. This mixture was left with periodic shaking overnight in a sealed glass Corex tube. The next day, the mixture was spun at 2500 rpm for 10 min on a bench centrifuge at room temperature. The supernatant was removed to a clean Corex tube. The pellet was re-extracted with a further 1.5 ml of ethanol and 1.5 ml of acetone, spun and the two supernatants pooled. The total supernatant was dried under nitrogen at room temperature. To the residue was added 6 ml of 70% (v/v) aqueous methanol; the mixture was vortexed and then incubated overnight at  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The next day, the mixture was spun at 3200 rpm for 20 min at  $4^{\circ}\text{C}$  and the supernatant was removed to a clean Corex tube. The pellet was re-extracted with a further 1 ml of 70% (v/v) aqueous methanol by vortexing and spun again at 3200 rpm for 20 min at  $4^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The two supernatants were pooled and dried under nitrogen for analysis by HPLCMS/MS.

The extracts were dissolved in HPLC mobile phase (0.25 ml) and the paraben concentration determined by HPLCMS/MS. Samples (20  $\mu\text{l}$ ) of the final extracts were chromatographed on a Hypersil Elite C18 column (150  $\times$  2.1 mm; 5  $\mu\text{m}$ ) at a flow rate of 0.3 ml min $^{-1}$  and eluted with a linear binary gradient of 15 mM ammonium acetate pH 4.5 (A) and acetonitrile (B) ( $t = 0$  min A 70%,  $t = 15$  min A 40%,  $t = 16$  min A 70%,  $t = 25$  min next injection). The HPLC retention times for the paraben standards are provided in Table 1. The parabens were detected with a Sciex API 2000 triple quadrupole mass spectrometer equipped with a heated nebulizer probe operated in the negative ion mode. Optimal setting of the instrument for detection by mass reaction monitoring (MRM) was established empirically by infusion of paraben standards (1  $\mu\text{g ml}^{-1}$ ). The mass transitions selected for MRM detection utilized the fragmentation of the deprotonated molecular ion and are listed in Table 1. Chromatographic peaks corresponding to individual parabens were detected automatically and the mass of analyte calculated after interpolation from calibration curves prepared over the working range 1–300 ng ml $^{-1}$  using the Analyst<sup>TM</sup> (PE Biosystems) software package.

Extractions were performed in groups such that each group of two to five tumour extractions had one blank

extraction carried out alongside, with all procedures identical except for the omission of tumour material. However, analysis by HPLCMS/MS was carried out for all samples on the same day sequentially. Final paraben concentrations were calculated by subtraction of the values obtained from the corresponding blank extraction. Because the blank values showed variation, statistical analysis was performed using the paired *t*-test method (Snedecor & Cochran, 1980).

## RESULTS

#### Extraction of parabens from breast tissue and detection by thin-layer chromatography

In initial exploratory experiments it was possible to detect parabens in human breast tissue using the extraction procedures described in the Materials and Methods section, followed by thin-layer chromatography against paraben standards. Aliquots (10–400 ng) of methylparaben, ethylparaben, *n*-propylparaben, *n*-butylparaben and isobutylparaben were run on thin-layer plates and could be detected under ultraviolet light. Under these conditions all the paraben standards ran to the same position, which was, on average,  $0.47 \pm 0.03$  of the distance to the solvent front. Extracts of human breast tissue contained compounds visible under ultraviolet light at the same relative position as the paraben standards. From rough comparison by eye of the relative levels of paraben standards, it was estimated over six separate extractions that the samples contained in the region of 10–50 ng paraben per g breast tissue. Figure 1 shows the results of one experiment in which three aliquots (97, 194 and 388 ng) of *n*-butylparaben standards were run on thin-layer plates alongside the extract of 1 g of breast tissue. The relative intensities of the resulting bands under ultraviolet light were subjected to image analysis and plotted as a standard curve shown in Fig. 1. The relative intensity of the paraben band extracted from 1 g of tissue was 11 730, which corresponded to 47.1 ng paraben g $^{-1}$  tissue.

It was on the basis of these preliminary results that we then proceeded to more detailed identification of individual parabens by HPLCMS/MS

#### Extraction of parabens from human breast tumours and analysis by HPLCMS/MS

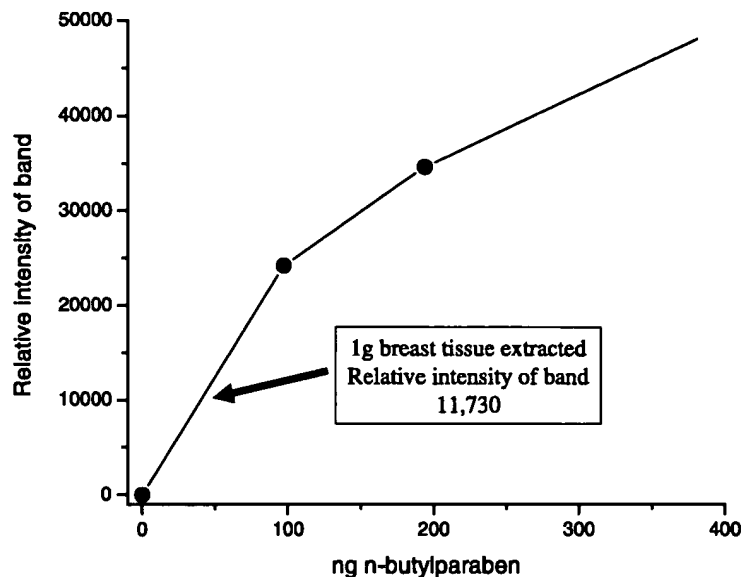
Retention times and mass transition for MRM detection for the six paraben standards are shown in Table 1.

Parabens were extracted from a sample of each of 20 human breast tumours and extracts were analysed by HPLCMS/MS against paraben standards as described in the Materials and Methods section. Chromatographic peaks due to methylparaben, ethylparaben, *n*-propylparaben, *n*-butylparaben and isobutylparaben were seen in breast tumour extracts and were well resolved from one another. No peaks due to benzylparaben at its retention time of 14.0 min were seen in any of the tumour extracts. A typical chromatogram is shown in Fig. 2.

At a practical level, extractions were performed in small groups such that each group contained between two and five tumour samples together with one blank extraction. The blank extraction was performed with all procedures identical, except for the omission of tumour

Table 1—Paraben standards: HPLC retention times and mass transition for MRM detection

Analyte	HPLC retention time (min)	Mass transition (Q1–Q3; <i>m/z</i> ) for MRM detection
Methylparaben	4.6	151.1–92.1
Ethylparaben	7.3	165.1–92.1
<i>n</i> -Propylparaben	10.6	179.1–92.1
Isobutylparaben	13.4	193.1–92.1
<i>n</i> -Butylparaben	13.7	193.1–92.1
Benzylparaben	14.0	227.3–92.1



**Figure 1.** Detection of parabens from human breast tissue by thin-layer chromatography. Three aliquots of *n*-butylparaben (97, 194 and 388 ng) were run as standards on thin-layer plates alongside the extract of 1 g of breast tissue, and the relative intensities of the resulting bands under ultraviolet light were subjected to image analysis. The relative intensities of the bands for the three aliquots of *n*-butylparaben were plotted as a standard curve as shown. The relative intensity of the paraben band extracted from 1 g of tissue was 11 730, which calculated to an equivalent of 47.1 ng of paraben.

material. The concentrations of parabens in the 20 tumours as measured by HPLCMS/MS were corrected by subtraction of the corresponding blank value. Results are shown in Table 2. Because the blank values showed variation, the statistical significance of the mean corrected concentrations of each paraben in the 20 tumour extracts was tested by the paired *t*-test method, thus enabling the confidence limits of these mean values to be calculated (Table 3).

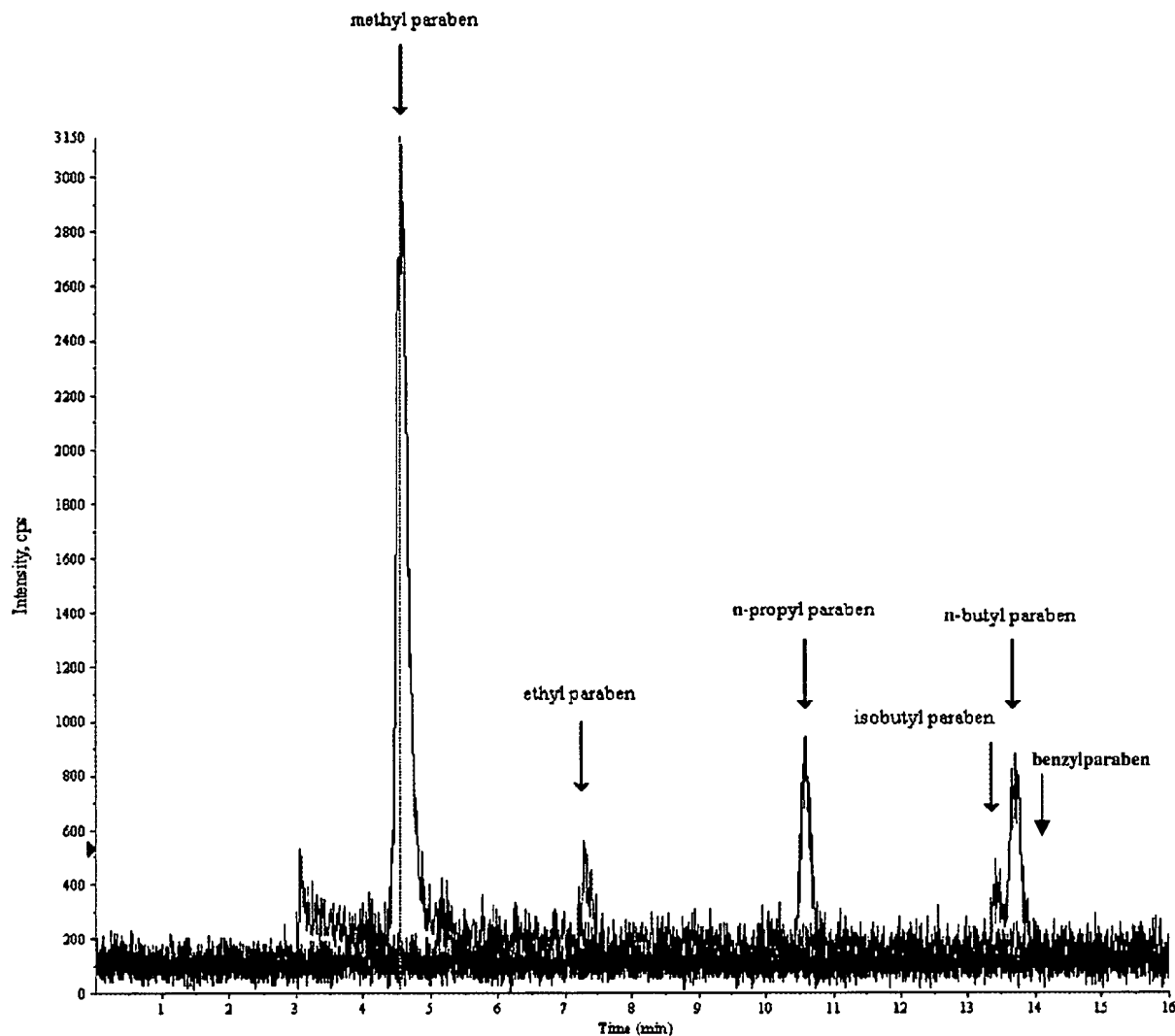
The reasons for the blank values for parabens, and their variation, are not clear. The MS data indicated that the blank values were genuinely parabens and not other contaminating compounds. The blank values did not come from the HPLCMS/MS procedure because blanks through the equipment were entirely negative. The blank values came from the extraction procedure itself. In a series of 30 blanks carried out on individual parts of the extraction procedure, it was not possible to identify any one specific reagent or procedure contributing to the blank value. However, when blank values were subtracted from the corresponding tumour extract values, 18/20 tumour extractions showed values of total paraben above the blank values. Values for total paraben present in the 20 tumour samples were 0–54.5 ng g<sup>-1</sup> tissue, with an overall mean value of 20.6 ng g<sup>-1</sup>. Methylparaben was present at the highest level, with an average value of 12.8 ± 2.2 ng g<sup>-1</sup> tissue. This represented 62% of the total paraben recovered in the extraction. Benzylparaben was not detected in any tumour extract.

Estimates of recovery of parabens from the extraction procedure were made by spiking samples with benzylparaben, because this was the only paraben not detected in any blank or tumour extract. Analysis by HPLCMS/MS of three extraction blank samples, each spiked with 200 ng of benzylparaben, gave an average recovery of this paraben of 48.5% ± 4.8%.

## DISCUSSION

Mean concentrations of each of six parabens in extracts of 20 human breast tumours (in the range 0–12.8 ng g<sup>-1</sup> tissue; Table 3) have been measured with acceptable confidence. The reasons for the analytical blank values for parabens in these studies have not been identified definitively but probably relate to the ubiquitous use of parabens as preservatives even in laboratory detergents and personal care products of the operators. Analogous problems have been encountered with the measurement of phthalate esters because of their common use as plasticizers and their ubiquitous dispersal as impurities in solvents, water, glassware and many items of clinical and analytical laboratory equipment (Lopez-Aviva *et al.*, 1990; Leung & Giang, 1993; Colon *et al.*, 2000). More recent work in these laboratories (unpublished) has shown that immersion of all glassware in 1.0 M aqueous sodium hydroxide, followed by copious rinsing with double-distilled water, prior to use of this glassware in tissue extraction greatly reduces the blank values of paraben concentrations as measured by HPLCMS/MS. This addition to the analytical procedure is therefore recommended for use in further studies on paraben concentrations in tissues.

The total mean paraben level was found to be of the order of 20 ng g<sup>-1</sup> tissue. This adds parabens to the list of environmental oestrogenic chemicals that can be found to accumulate in the human breast and already includes polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and organochlorine pesticides (OCPs) (Dobson, 1993; Hardell *et al.*, 1996; Guttus *et al.*, 1998; Stellman *et al.*, 1998, 2000). Comparisons between the relative levels of parabens and other pollutants are not easy because several factors have to be



**Figure 2.** The HPLC/MS chromatograms for methylparaben, ethylparaben, *n*-propylparaben, isobutylparaben and *n*-butylparaben in a human breast tumour extract. Tumour tissue was extracted as described in the text, chromatographed on a Hypersil Elite HPLC column and detected by tandem mass spectrometry in the mass reaction monitoring mode. The annotated arrows indicate the identity of the peaks evident in the chromatograms. Benzylparaben was not seen.

taken into account, including the source of tissue used and the number of isomers or congeners. Most studies of bioaccumulation of pollutant chemicals are carried out by using serum or urine and studies using breast adipose tissue are few. Furthermore, for parabens there are only six commonly used forms whereas for PCBs there are 209 congeners. Studies of breast adipose tissue from women in Long Island, New York, without breast cancer showed a mean body burden for 14 PCB congeners of  $267 \text{ ng g}^{-1}$  and for seven OCPs of  $707.5 \text{ ng g}^{-1}$  (Stellman *et al.*, 1998). However, Table 4 shows that levels in breast tissue of individual pesticide residues and PCB congeners vary substantially. Although knowledge of total body burdens of these compounds is far from complete, the accumulation of parabens in breast tissue does fall within the broad range of these other compounds.

In the present study, paraben concentrations measured in tumours were unequivocally of the esters themselves.

This demonstrates that at least a proportion of the parabens present in cosmetic, food and pharmaceutical products can be absorbed and retained in human body tissues without hydrolysis by tissue esterases to the common metabolite *p*-hydroxybenzoic acid. These results complement earlier studies in which there was evidence that the oestrogenic properties of these parabens in culture of human breast cancer cells were also due to the esters themselves and not to a common metabolite (Byford *et al.*, 2002; Darbre *et al.*, 2002, 2003). However, these studies cannot identify either the source of the parabens or whether they entered the human body by an oral or by a topical route. Nor can they identify whether the parabens entered the human breast by a systemic route or through non-systemic mechanisms involving simply local absorption and diffusion from chemical overload of topical preparations applied to the breast area. Recent evaluation of parabens in uterotrophic assays has shown them to give oestrogenic responses in immature

Table 2—The HPLC/MS/MS analysis of parabens in 20 human breast tumours\*

Tumour extract	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Mean	SEM
Benzylparaben	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Isobutylparaben	5.2	0.1	5.2	3.3	2.8	3.5	2.5	1.9	4.9	2.2	1.7	3.9	2.2	2.3	1.2	2.0	1.7	0.0	1.0	0.0	2.4	0.4
n-Butylparaben	15.3	7.2	29.5	22.4	14.3	15.5	9.8	6.7	10.3	7.4	2.4	14.7	7.1	6.7	7.4	7.2	5.3	5.3	5.7	3.2	10.1	1.5
n-Propylparaben	6.5	7.9	18.6	18.4	10.9	17.9	10.0	10.5	11.6	6.9	9.1	16.5	10.2	17.2	10.1	15.4	4.2	5.3	5.5	5.6	10.9	1.1
Ethylparaben	7.2	3.0	9.6	6.3	4.6	2.3	1.9	1.8	7.0	3.2	1.8	6.4	2.1	4.5	1.1	2.2	1.8	0.7	2.0	2.1	3.6	0.6
Methylparaben	34.2	20.6	53.0	49.9	34.4	37.6	27.3	19.6	35.7	16.0	17.2	36.4	21.6	39.6	18.5	28.8	36.7	8.2	12.0	10.7	27.9	2.8
Total paraben	68.3	38.8	115.9	100.3	67.0	76.9	51.4	40.4	69.5	35.7	32.1	77.9	43.1	70.3	38.3	55.6	49.7	17.3	26.2	21.6	54.8	5.8
Blank value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Mean	SEM
Benzylparaben	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Isobutylparaben	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
n-Butylparaben	6.5	18.0	13.4	18.0	13.4	12.0	9.3	4.0	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.3	0.4
n-Propylparaben	2.0	13.4	13.4	13.4	13.4	12.0	9.3	4.0	6.8	4.0	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	7.9	1.8
Ethylparaben	1.9	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.6	0.3
Methylparaben	10.1	27.8	27.8	27.8	20.5	20.5	20.5	10.3	10.3	10.3	10.3	10.3	10.3	10.3	11.6	11.6	11.6	11.6	11.6	11.6	15.0	3.0
Total paraben	20.5	61.4	61.4	61.4	45.9	45.9	45.9	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	30.6	30.6	30.6	30.6	30.6	30.6	33.8	6.8
Tumour less blank	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Mean	SEM
Benzylparaben	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Isobutylparaben	5.2	0.1	5.2	3.3	2.8	1.3	0.3	-0.3	2.7	0.2	-0.4	1.8	0.1	0.2	-1.1	-0.3	-0.6	-1.1	-0.1	-1.1	0.9	0.4
n-Butylparaben	8.8	0.7	11.5	4.4	-3.7	6.2	0.5	-2.6	1.0	3.4	-1.6	10.7	3.1	2.7	-0.8	-1.0	-2.9	1.0	3.5	1.0	2.3	1.0
n-Propylparaben	4.5	5.9	5.2	5.0	-2.5	5.9	-2.0	-1.5	-0.4	0.2	2.3	9.7	3.4	10.4	1.7	7.0	-4.3	0.5	0.7	0.8	2.6	0.9
Ethylparaben	5.3	1.2	7.4	4.1	2.4	0.5	0.0	-0.1	5.1	1.3	-0.2	4.5	0.2	2.6	1.1	2.1	1.8	-0.9	0.4	0.5	2.0	0.5
Methylparaben	24.1	10.5	25.2	22.1	6.6	17.1	6.8	-0.9	15.2	5.7	6.9	26.1	11.3	29.3	6.9	17.2	25.1	-1.8	2.1	0.8	12.8	2.2
Total paraben	47.9	18.4	54.5	38.9	5.6	31.0	5.5	-5.5	23.7	10.7	7.1	52.8	18.1	45.3	7.7	25.0	19.1	-2.3	6.6	2.0	20.6	4.2

\* Parabens extractions were performed in small groups such that each group contained between two and five tumour samples together with one corresponding blank extraction. The blank extraction was performed with all procedures identical except for the omission of tumour material. Results are shown in ng g<sup>-1</sup> tumour for the 20 extractions and for the corresponding blank values. The concentrations of parabens in the 20 tumours were then each corrected by subtraction of the corresponding blank value.

Table 3—Confidence limits of mean concentrations (ng g<sup>-1</sup>) of parabens in the 20 human breast tumours of Table 2

Tumour minus blank	Mean	Confidence limit
Benzylparaben	0.0	0.0–0.0 (95%)
Isobutylparaben	0.9	0.1–1.7 (90%)
<i>n</i> -Butylparaben	2.3	0.3–4.3 (95%)
<i>n</i> -Propylparaben	2.6	0.7–4.5 (95%)
Ethylparaben	2.0	1.0–3.0 (95%)
Methylparaben	12.8	8.2–17.4 (95%)
Total paraben	20.6	11.8–29.4 (95%)

rodent uterus only when administered subcutaneously or topically but not orally (Routledge *et al.*, 1998; Hossaini *et al.*, 2000; Darbre *et al.*, 2002, 2003), which suggests that skin penetration may be an important route for entry to the body.

A major issue in studies of accumulation of environmental pollutants in body tissues is whether the levels reached could be sufficiently high to exert any biological action. In four of the 20 tumours, total paraben concentration was more than twice the average level and, allowing for a 50% recovery of parabens through the analytical procedure, the corrected average level of parabens was ca. 100 ng g<sup>-1</sup> tissue. This concentration may be compared with the level (ca. 150 ng ml<sup>-1</sup>; 10<sup>-6</sup>M) in culture medium at which *n*-propylparaben, *n*-butylparaben and isobutylparaben stimulated growth of oestrogen-dependent MCF7 human breast cancer cells (Okubo *et al.*, 2001; Byford *et al.*, 2002; Darbre *et al.*, 2002, 2003). It is therefore not inconceivable that the levels of parabens measured in this study could exert oestrogenic effects on

epithelial cells in the human breast. Although in rodent uterotrophic assays the levels of parabens were administered at a higher range of 0.1–10 mg g<sup>-1</sup> body weight (Routledge *et al.*, 1998; Darbre *et al.*, 2002, 2003), these studies did not incorporate any measurements of paraben levels reached in the uterus at the time of response, which prevents assessment of the concentrations needed for physiological response.

It is interesting that the paraben detected in greatest amounts was methylparaben. This may reflect the more widespread use of methylparaben in consumer products (Rastogi *et al.*, 1995). Alternatively, it may reflect the greater ability of methylparaben to be absorbed into body tissues and to resist hydrolysis by esterases of human skin and subcutaneous fat tissue (Lobemeier *et al.*, 1996). By contrast, benzylparaben was not found in any of the 20 breast tumours and this may similarly be attributed to its less frequent use in consumer products.

These measurements of paraben concentrations in breast tumours open the way technically to more detailed determinations of paraben levels in human body tissues. This study used 20 breast tumour samples because of the availability of the material. However, it will now be important to measure levels in corresponding normal tissue to determine whether there is any difference between normal and cancer tissues. Larger studies also are needed to give more representative values for body burdens in different tissues and across the human population. A main problem with human breast tumour samples is the varied infiltration of the tumour with fatty tissue and blood vessels and it will be important in future work therefore to have more precise histological information on the tumours in order especially to be able to relate results to fatty versus non-fatty tissue. It would be informative to ascertain whether there are any gradients in the accumulation of

Table 4—Summary of mean concentrations (ng g<sup>-1</sup>) of individual pesticide residues and PCB congeners in human breast adipose tissue from control and breast cancer patients from two published studies

Pesticide or PCB	Control	Breast cancer	Control	Breast cancer
HCB	206	343	16	18
βHCH	72	84	16	20
Oxychlorane			39	46
<i>trans</i> -Nonachlor			40	51
<i>p,p'</i> -DDE	450	838	374	419
<i>o,p'</i> -DDD			13	16
<i>p,p'</i> -DDT	24	30	12	12
PCB 74			27	30
PCB 99			14	19
PCB 118	58	85	24	30
PCB 138	176	241	22	29
PCB 146			7	9
PCB 153	437	664	63	76
PCB 156	61	64	9	11
PCB 167			1	2
PCB 170	229	259	11	14
PCB 172			2	2
PCB 178			3	4
PCB 180	258	400	34	42
PCB 183			4	6
PCB 187			13	16
Reference	Guttes <i>et al.</i> (1998)	Guttes <i>et al.</i> (1998)	Stellman <i>et al.</i> (2000)	Stellman <i>et al.</i> (2000)
Location	Hesse, Germany	Hesse, Germany	New York, USA	New York, USA
Number of samples	<i>n</i> = 20	<i>n</i> = 45	<i>n</i> = 323	<i>n</i> = 232

parabens across the human breast from axilla to sternum in case the topical application of cosmetic at one place influences the levels of parabens detectable. It will also be important to know whether there is any difference between levels detectable in breast tumours compared with adjacent non-tumour material in order to determine whether higher levels of paraben accumulation might be present in the tumours. Such information, taken together with that of concentrations in tissues of endogenous steroid hormones and other xenoestrogens, should enable assess-

ment to be made of the impact of these weakly oestrogenic parabens on human health, and whether paraben accumulation from currently permitted levels in cosmetics, foods and pharmaceuticals remains acceptable.

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## EDITORIAL

# Significance of the Detection of Esters of *p*-Hydroxybenzoic Acid (Parabens) in Human Breast Tumours

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Key words: breast cancer; hydroxybenzoic acid; parabens; oestrogen; tumour; carcinogenesis; underarm; deodorant; antiperspirant.

This issue of *Journal of Applied Toxicology* publishes the paper *Concentrations of Parabens in Human Breast Tumours* by Darbre *et al.* (2004), which reports that esters of *p*-hydroxybenzoic acid (parabens) can be detected in samples of tissue from human breast tumours. Breast tumour samples were supplied from 20 patients, in collaboration with the Edinburgh Breast Unit Research Group, and analysed by high-pressure liquid chromatography and tandem mass spectrometry. The parabens are used as antimicrobial preservatives in underarm deodorants and antiperspirants and in a wide range of other consumer products. The parabens also have inherent oestrogenic and other hormone related activity (increased progesterone receptor gene expression). As oestrogen is a major aetiological factor in the growth and development of the majority of human breast cancers, it has been previously suggested by Darbre that parabens and other chemicals in underarm cosmetics may contribute to the rising incidence of breast cancer. The significance of the finding of parabens in tumour samples is discussed here in terms of 1) Darbre *et al.*'s study design, 2) what can be inferred from this type of data (and what can not, such as the cause of these tumours), 3) the toxicology of these compounds and 4) the limitations of the existing toxicology database and the need to consider data that is appropriate to human exposures. Copyright © 2004 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

## INTRODUCTION

This issue of *Journal of Applied Toxicology* publishes the paper 'Concentrations of Parabens in Human Breast Tumours' by Darbre *et al.* (2004) which reports that esters of *p*-hydroxybenzoic acid (parabens) can be detected in samples of tissue from human breast tumours. Breast tumour samples were supplied from 20 patients in a collaboration with the Edinburgh Breast Unit Research Group, and analysed by high pressure liquid chromatography and tandem mass spectrometry. The parabens are used as antimicrobial preservatives in underarm deodorants and antiperspirants, and in a wide range of other consumer products. The parabens also have inherent oestrogenic activity (briefly reviewed in the next section) and oestrogen is a major aetiological factor in the growth and development of human breast cancer. It has previously been suggested that chemicals in underarm cosmetics may contribute to the rising incidence of breast cancer (Darbre, 2001; 2003; and see Harvey, 2003) and the significance of the finding of parabens in tumour samples is therefore highly topical.

## OESTROGEN AS A COMMON FACTOR IN BREAST CANCER AND PARABEN TOXICITY

It has been known for many years that oestrogen is the major aetiological factor in the development of breast cancer and, indeed, modern therapies continue to use pharmacological receptor blockade and synthetic suppression (e.g. aromatase inhibition) in clinical treatments (McPherson *et al.*, 1994; Wiseman, 1994; Elledge & Osbourne, 1997; Walker, 1999; Lønning, 2001; Beral *et al.*, 2003). Given this, it is logical to suggest that application of oestrogenic agents to areas adjacent to the breast may be an unnecessary risk in some women (in this context it has been suggested that first-degree relatives of breast cancer patients and peri-adolescent females would be at most risk of continued exposure to oestrogenic chemicals). The ubiquitous use of underarm deodorants and antiperspirants throughout the Western world means that millions of women have applied a range of chemicals to the axilla of the arm and it is surprising that only recently have some of these chemical ingredients been screened for the toxicologically important endpoints of inherent oestrogenic and hormonal activity.

There are now numerous reports that various parabens are oestrogenic. Lemini *et al.* (1997) reported that subcutaneous administration of *p*-hydroxybenzoic acid produced vaginal cornification and increased uterine weights (both classic effects of the action of endogenous oestradiol).

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in mice. Routledge *et al.* (1998) reported that butylparaben competed with [ $^3$ H]oestradiol in an oestrogen receptor binding assay, that methyl-, ethyl-, propyl- and butylparaben were weakly positive in a yeast oestrogen assay and that butylparaben was positive in an immature rat uterotrophic assay by the subcutaneous (but not oral; see later) administration route. In human MCF7 breast cancer cells, Byford *et al.* (2002) have shown that methyl-, ethyl-, *n*-propyl- and *n*-butylparaben are oestrogenic. Okubo *et al.* (2001) reported similar findings with ethyl-, propyl-, butyl-, isopropyl- and isobutylparaben and also that butylparaben and isobutylparaben increased progesterone receptor gene expression. Interestingly, oestrogen-progestagen hormone replacement therapy confers the greatest risk of breast cancer (Beral *et al.*, 2003) and the parabens show activity to both oestrogen and progesterone receptors. Darbre *et al.* (2002, 2003), using both MCF7 and ZR-75-1 human breast cancer cell lines, report oestrogenic activity for isobutylparaben and benzylparaben. These latter studies also reported oestrogenic activity *in vivo*: isobutylparaben resulted in a uterotrophic response in immature mice following subcutaneous administration but, of most significance, benzylparaben induced a uterotrophic response following topical administration (application to dorsal skin of 33 mg per mouse per day for 3 days; Darbre *et al.*, 2003). Parabens also have structures predicted to bind to the oestrogen receptor (Hong *et al.*, 2002).

Harvey (2003) provides a perspective on the dose levels reported to produce effects in short-term *in vivo* animal studies (i.e. while dose levels are relatively high, convention dictates that risk assessments would apply safety factors of at least 100-fold to data from animal studies when extrapolating to safe human exposures) and the relative lack of activity by the oral route (presumably due to metabolic breakdown, an effect that apparently does not occur with the more direct subcutaneous or topical administration routes in animal studies) as factors particularly relevant to risk assessments specific for cosmetic use, and the possibility of inappropriate extrapolation from the existing parabens animal toxicology database. In reviewing the various reports of paraben oestrogenicity, potency ranges from 500-fold less than oestradiol (reported by Lemini *et al.* (1997) in a rat uterotrophic assay following subcutaneous administration of *p*-hydroxybenzoic acid) to 10 000-fold less potent as reported by Routledge *et al.* (1998) for butylparaben in the *in vitro* yeast assay. Clearly there is a need to place human exposures of the parabens into perspective: contributions to the total body burden of oestrogenic agents include endogenous oestrogen and a variety of xenobiotics (e.g., resorcylic acid lactone residues in food; Everett *et al.*, 1987). Parabens represent just one class of these oestrogenic materials, all of which need to be considered both in terms of inherent oestrogenic potency as well as their actual concentrations in human tissues. Although oestrogenic potency of the parabens is relatively weak, the use patterns of underarm cosmetics and parabens in other products can result in long-term exposures.

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DETECTION OF PARABENS IN BREAST TUMOURS

Darbre *et al.* (2004) have shown that a common group of chemicals used in underarm deodorant and antiperspirant

formulations and other consumer products, previously generally regarded as safe but recently shown to possess oestrogenic activity in a wide variety of assays, can be detected in human breast tumour tissue. This finding would logically be a significant prerequisite criterion to the hypothesis that these compounds may be involved in, or in some way contribute to, the incidence of breast cancer (which has steadily risen over recent decades in the UK and elsewhere, paralleling, for example, underarm cosmetic usage; see Darbre, 2003) in that there would obviously need to be cellular exposure to these chemicals in order to induce any direct carcinogenic response. If the source of these chemicals was prior historical use of underarm cosmetics containing these ingredients (at present it is not known what the half-life or clearance of these chemicals from human breast tissue is, or the contribution from sources other than underarm cosmetics — see below), then such data suggest that these chemicals can be absorbed dermally and probably persist in human breast tissue. Several points must be made in discussing Darbre *et al.*'s (2004) findings:

- (i) The detection of parabens in breast tumour tissue should not be taken to imply causality of the individual cancer, because the findings are essentially coincidental in nature.
- (ii) 'Normal' breast tissue, and other tissue, was not analysed. Although the question remains of what levels occur in such control tissue, it should be recognized that apparently normal tissue at the time of biopsy may later develop a tumour (this is important because cancer represents a risk over a lifetime and not a single time point) and there are questions of what would be an appropriate control for this type of data.
- (iii) The obvious route of entry into the breast tissue is local absorption from the underarm (because esters were detected rather than metabolites) and the source is probably therefore underarm cosmetics. However, the source needs to be confirmed and Darbre *et al.* make it clear that their study does not identify route.
- (iv) Although the data could be consistent with local absorption, it would be interesting to establish what the levels of parabens are in other tissues (e.g. blood, adipose and those also sensitive to oestrogen).
- (v) It is obvious that extraneous synthetic organic chemicals serve no useful function in the human breast but, the question is, have they caused harm?
- (vi) Related to this, Darbre *et al.*'s (2004) study analysed parabens because of interest in their use in underarm cosmetics: other chemicals also may be present (because these types of study are records of single time points, the levels of a variety of extraneous chemicals could increase or decline over a lifetime).
- (vii) Darbre *et al.*'s (2004) study shows the presence of parabens in breast tumour tissue: although it has been emphasized that the significance of this should not be overinterpreted, their route of disposition and possible effects on the breast are worthy of further investigation.
- (viii) In the general context of the hypothesis, any response of cells in the breast will depend on the properties of the chemicals, the timing and relative duration of exposure (consider potential differences of effect

between adolescent exposure with the developing breast and exposure in later life), the dose and the interaction with other genetic and environmental factors.

## GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The findings of parabens in tumour samples are additional results in line with the general hypothesis that there may be a link between oestrogenic compounds commonly used in underarm cosmetics and other consumer products and breast cancer. The results alone, however, do not suggest that these chemicals caused the tumours in these patients. Darbre *et al.*'s findings invite several questions: how did the parabens get into the breast, are they persistent and could they do harm? The answers require further research.

The hypothesis that underarm cosmetics may contribute to the incidence of breast cancer has obvious implications, not least because of the size of the population potentially exposed. The role of oestrogen in breast cancer is clear. It is also now clear that the parabens are weakly oestrogenic and thus there is logic to the hypothesis when combined with other lines of evidence (Darbre, 2003). However, apparently little is known of any side-effects associated with long-term, low-level exposures to synthetic xenoestrogens. The use of underarm cosmetics presents a special case because of the direct application of the compounds to skin. Darbre *et al.*'s (2004) study indicates that paraben esters are detectable in breast tumour tissue, which could feasibly result from a previous history of cosmetic use, local dermal absorption and some degree of residue persistence, but the route also could be from other sources,

such as orally if there was no metabolic transformation of the parent compound.

The hypothesis forwarded that underarm cosmetics may be implicated in the incidence of breast cancer (Darbre, 2003) has been discussed also in terms of the potential toxicity of oestrogenic formulation ingredients (Harvey, 2003). Although recent efforts have been made to examine 'antiperspirant use and the risk of breast cancer' (see Mirick *et al.* (2002), who report no association based on retrospective interview), there is a need for research that carefully focuses on chemical toxicity issues (i.e. the specific formulation ingredients and not simply underarm cosmetics *per se*). Research also should consider sensitive population subgroups (especially adolescents and first-degree relatives of breast cancer patients) and requires designs with the sensitivity to elucidate any effects of long-term, low-level exposures to mixtures. As far as toxicological reviews and risk assessments of the parabens are concerned, they apparently have not taken into account recent evidence of inherent oestrogenic and hormonal activities (Soni *et al.*, 2002; Willis, 1995) and there is a perceived need to conduct up-to-date risk assessments on the suitability of each type of paraben specifically for their use in underarm cosmetics. Finally, Darbre *et al.*'s (2004) study is a contribution to a body of literature that reports chemicals in human breast tissue, with the suggestion that these compounds may be carcinogenic (Falck *et al.*, 1992; Snedeker, 2001), particularly breast organochlorine concentrations correlated with increased cancer risk (Aronson *et al.*, 2000) and related to oestrogenicity (Starek, 2003). Whether underarm cosmetics will prove to be a special case because of their direct application or not, unlike diffuse environmental exposures, individual use is preventable and the removal of oestrogenic formulants would effectively resolve at least one potential mechanistic factor central to this hypothesis.

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